The Supreme Cosmic Lineage

(A Commentary on the Names: Jyeshtha · Shreshtha · Padmanabha · Prajapatih · Vruddhatma · Prapitamahah from Sri Vishnu Sahasranama)

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The names of the Almighty are never treated as mere abstract metaphors. They are literal, hierarchical designations that systematically reinforce **Hari Sarvottamattvam**—the absolute, independent supremacy of Lord Vishnu over all time, matter, and souls. Here is how the foundational names of cosmic eldership and creation unfold sequentially in the Stotram:

JYESHTHAH (sloka # 8/67)

Jyeshta means elderly, most ancient, the oldest, senior most, supreme, eldest of all beings, the first and the foremost. Who else can be JyEshta in this universe other than Lord Vishnu.

Jyeshthah signifies that Vishnu is **Kala-Ateeta** (beyond Time) and the uncaused cause of Time itself. Vishnu is *Jyeshthah* because He does not rely on Time to exist; rather, Time relies entirely on Him for its creation and movement.

"Atha puruṣo ha vai nārāyaṇo'kāmayata prajāḥ sṛjeyeti"

(Narayana Upanishad)

In the beginning, the Supreme Person Narayana willed to create beings." Before time, space, and elements existed, only He stood. This chronological priority—being the absolute first—is what defines His ***Jyeshthathva***.

Sri Madhvacharya cites Rig Veda 1.156.2, which states Vishnu is ***Poorvyaaya*** (the most ancient) yet eternally ***Naveeyase*** (fresh and ever-youthful). Unlike material beings whose aging leads to physical decay, Vishnu's "eldership" means He existed before primordial matter (*Prakriti*) and time were born.

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SHRESHTHAH (8/68)

Shreshthah means "The Best." Dvaita asserts an eternal, strict hierarchy of souls based on their spiritual capacity. Chaturmukha Brahma sits at the peak of all created souls (*Jivas*), and Goddess Lakshmi sits above him. However, Lord Vishnu stands completely separate and supreme above the entire hierarchy (*Sarvottama*). He is *Shreshthah* because His auspicious attributes (*Kalyana Gunas*) are infinite, flawless, and mathematically unmatched by anyone.

"Nārāyaṇaḥ paraṁ brahma tattvaṁ nārāyaṇaḥ paraḥ"

(Narayana Suktam)

Narayana is the Supreme Brahman; Narayana is the Supreme Reality." He is not just a deity within the universe; He is the apex *Shreshthah* value sitting at the very top of all architectural truth.

The Vedic axiom, "Agnirvai devānāmavamo viṣṇuḥ paramaḥ" (**Aitareya Upanishad**), explicitly declares Vishnu as the absolute peak (*Paramah*) of all cosmic entities.

PRAJAPATIH (8/69)

While mundane language uses *Prajapati* to refer to secondary creators like Brahma or Daksha, Dvaita explains that all Vedic names fundamentally point only to Vishnu via *Mukhya-Vritti* (the primary, literal meaning of words). All *Jivas* are completely dependent (*Paratantra*). Vishnu is the true *Prajapatih* because He actively directs, controls, and fuels the functional capacities of the secondary creators. Without Vishnu's *Prana* (life-force) energising them, they cannot create.

"Nārāyaṇāt brahmā jāyate... nārāyaṇāt prajāpatayaḥ prajāyante" (Narayana Upanishad):

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"From Narayana, Brahma is born... from Narayana, the Prajapatis are generated." Because the progenitors (*Prajapatis*) themselves owe their birth and kinetic power to Narayana, He is the *Mukhya Prajapati*—the Master of the Creators.

In **Bhagavad Gita 11.39**, when Arjuna addresses the Lord as *Prajapati*, Madhvacharya's Bhashya clarifies that Vishnu is the immediate Lord of all people (*Praja* + *Pathi*) and the direct creator of Brahma.

To truly understand Him as **Prajapatih**, we look to His form as **Padmanabha–The Primordial Source** (SVSN-sloka # 21)

Padmanabha means the One who has a lotus-like navel, or the One who has the lotus in His navel that has given birth to creation. The lotus stalk that emerged from His navel (*naabhi*) at the time of the universal dawn unfurled into a magnificent lotus (*Padma/Kamala*), in the midst of which appeared Lord Brahma, marking the beginning of the *Padma Kalpa*.

As *Padmanabha*, Lord Vishnu is the primordial and supreme *Prajapatih* (the One who procreates)—the One who has given birth to the *Srushtikartha* Brahma. In this cosmic state, He is also **Damodara**—the One whose abdomen is the abode for the entire universe, in whose belly rests the entire creation, and upon whose supreme support everything is rested.

He is the ultimate Creator of the Universe, whose womb is the source of origin for the cosmos, the *Brahmaadi Devatas*, and all *Jeevas*. He is the causeless cause, directly responsible for the creation of everything. There cannot be any other cause other than Vishnu for the creation of the universe; He manifests Himself first, before the universe itself comes into being.

VRUDDHATMAH & PRAPITAMAHAH…
(The Ancestral Ultimate)

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VRUDDHATMAH (Sloka 38, Name #352)

Vruddhatmah identifies Vishnu as the **Puraatana Atma** (The Ancient, Primordial Self/Soul).

The word *Vruddha* here does not denote age-related decay, but rather structural permanence. While all dependent souls (*Jivas*) are subject to creation, transformation, and physical aging, Vishnu is eternally unchangeable, existing as the absolute, primordial root soul before history or creation began. He is the unbirthed source of all individual identities.

Vishnu is the ultimate *Vruddhatmah* (ancient, grandest soul) because He has no father or ancestor—He is the unbirthed root.

PRAPITAMAHAH (Sloka 104, Name #972)

Samastha PithruAntharyami Janardhana (The Inner Ruler of Ancestors).

In **Sloka 104 (Name #972)**, Sahasranama evaluates lineage on a grand, universal scale to reveal Vishnu as the ultimate Great-Grandfather:

Cosmic Lineage…

The Progenitors: The secondary creators and great sages—including the **Rishi Lineage** (like Marichi, Bhrigu, and Atri) and the **Manus**—who act as the immediate fathers/progenitors of humanity.

The Grandfather (*Pitamaha*): Chaturmukha Brahma, who is the direct father of the Rishi Lineage and the Manus, making him the universal grandfather (*Pitamaha*) of all creation.

The Great-Grandfather (*Prapitamahah*): Lord Vishnu, who birthed Chaturmukha Brahma from His navel lotus, standing as

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the uncaused source and ultimate Great-Grandfather of the entire cosmic family tree.

The Ultimate Realization: As **Janardhana**, He is the *Antharyami* (the in-dwelling spirit) residing within the Vasus, Rudras, and Adityas who represent our ancestors during rituals (*Tarpana*). When you offer ancestral oblations, it is *Janardhana* inside them who receives and satisfies the offering.

This semantic sequence proves that Lord Vishnu is chronologically the first (**Jyeshtha**), qualitatively the highest (**Shreshta**), originatively the source of cosmic lotus (**Padmanabha**), as functionally the ruler (**Prajapathi**), sequentially the root (**Vruddhatma**), and devotionally the ultimate ancestral refuge (**Prapitamaha**) of the universe.

श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु

नाहं कर्ता हरिः कर्ता - हरिः कर्ता हि केवलम्

हरी सर्वोत्तम - वायू जीवोत्तम